



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/658,907	09/11/2000	Kristopher T. Kohl	194-13026-CIP	4415

24923 7590 12/10/2001

PAUL S MADAN
MADAN, MOSSMAN & SRIRAM, PC
2603 AUGUSTA, SUITE 700
HOUSTON, TX 77057-1130

EXAMINER

KRISHNAMURTHY, RAMESH

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3753

DATE MAILED: 12/10/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/658,907

Applicant(s)

KOHL ET AL.

Examiner

Ramesh Krishnamurthy

Art Unit

3753

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 September 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 September 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 9.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

This office action is responsive to communications filed on 09/10/01.

Claims 1 – 18 are pending.

1. The drawings are objected to because it appears that Fig. 4 shows the arrow from additive pump B to the flow meter in the wrong direction. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1 – 8, 10, 14, 16 - 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Spivey in view of Merritt, Jr. et al..

Spivey discloses a system for a controlled injection of corrosion inhibiting additive to a production well (60), the system comprising a source of additive (13), a pump (30), a flow meter (35, 39) that generates appropriate signals via transmitters (36, 40) to a microprocessor based first controller (53) that controls a solenoid operated valve (46) to ensure a desired amount of additive to be injected into the well (60). The controller (53) needs to be programmed (Col. 4, lines 51 – 55) which presumably involves an operator and thus via suitable programming the system is inherently capable of being manually overridden with previously programmed values.

The patent to Spivey discloses the claimed invention with the exception of (a) having a second controller that remotely controls the first controller to deliver a desired amount of additive into the well and (b) the system controlling a plurality of well bores.

Merritt, Jr. et al. discloses a control system wherein a remote controller (40) controls a first controller (35) to deliver a desired amount of additive into the well. Merritt, Jr. et al. discloses that it is known in the art to set the flow rate of the additive to be within a predetermined range and to adjust the flow rate if the measured flow rates fall outside of the set range (Col. 4, lines 35 – 56). Merritt, Jr. discloses details of controlling a plurality of well bores.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to (a) have added a second controller at a remote location to the system of Spivey to be able to control the first controller from a remote location to deliver a desired amount of additive into the well, and (b) adapt the flow control/delivery system to work with a plurality of wells as recognized by Merritt, Jr. et al.

The turbine flow meter disclosed by Merritt, Jr. et al. is considered to be a positive displacement flow meter. Also, the onsite controller (35) has associated with it, a database management system comprising computer programs and historical performance data (col. 4 in Merritt, Jr. et al.) that could be easily shared with the second controller (40). Thus, the limitation of the database management system being associated with the second controller as recited in claim 8 is merely a design choice over those features disclosed in the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. that provides no new and / or unexpected results nor solves any stated problem.

It is also noted that the Spivey – Merritt, Jr. et al. combination as set forth above is capable of performing the method recited in claims 16 – 18.

5. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Spivey – Merritt, Jr. et al. combination as applied to claims 1 – 8, 10, 14, 16 - 18 above, and further in view of Tubel et al..

The system according the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. as set forth above, discloses all the claimed features with the exception of having the second remote controller being adapted to communicate with a plurality of computers over a network. The patent to Tubel et al. discloses (Fig. 4) that it is known in the art to employ a host computer ((10, Fig. 4) that is adapted to communicate with a plurality of computers over a network for the purpose of controlling wells located over a plurality of platforms. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to employ in the system according to the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. a host computer that is adapted to communicate with a

plurality of computers over a network for the purpose of controlling wells located over a plurality of platforms as recognized by Tubel et al..

6. Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Spivey – Merritt, Jr. et al. combination as applied to claims 1 – 8, 10, 14, 16 - 18 above, and further in view of Hayatdavoudi.

The system according the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. as set forth above discloses all the claimed features with the exception of having a sensor measuring a characteristic of the formation fluid and altering the supply of a selected additive in response to the measured characteristic. The patent to Hayatdavoudi discloses that it is known in the art to employ a sensor (38) for the purpose of monitoring the corroding property of the formation fluid and the measured characteristic is used to alter the supply of the additive from the reservoir (56). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to employ in the system according the Spivey-Merritt, Jr. et al. combination a sensor for measuring a characteristic of the formation fluid and altering the supply of a selected additive in response to the measured characteristic for the purpose of selectively controlling the injection of the additive as recognized by Hayatdavoudi.

7. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Spivey – Merritt, Jr. et al. combination as applied to claims 1 – 8, 10, 14, 16 - 18 above, and further in view of Pearson.

The system according the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. as set forth above discloses all the claimed features with the exception of having redundant flow

control devices that are controlled by an onsite controller. The patent to Pearson discloses that it is known in the art to employ redundant flow control devices (36) controlled by an onsite controller (54) for the purpose of obtaining assured supply of additive into the well. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to employ in the system according to the Spivey -Merritt, Jr. et al. combination redundant flow control devices for the purpose of obtaining assured supply of the additive into the well as recognized by Pearson.

8. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Spivey – Merritt, Jr. et al. combination as applied to claims 1 – 8, 10, 14, 16 - 18 above, and further in view of Johnson et al. (WO 98/57030).

The system according the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. as set forth above, discloses all the claimed features with the exception of having injection of additives at pre-determined depths. The published disclosure of Johnson et al. discloses (Fig. 3) that it is known in the art to employ injection of additive at predetermine depths for the purpose of achieving desired properties of the formation fluid. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to employ in the system according to the combination of Spivey and Merritt, Jr. et al. means for injecting the additive at a pre-determined depth for the purpose of achieving desired properties of the formation fluid as recognized by Johnson et al..

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ramesh Krishnamurthy whose telephone number is (703) 305 - 5295. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

Art Unit: 3753

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael P. Buiz, can be reached on (703) 308 - 0871. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308 - 7765.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308 - 0861.

Ramesh Krishnamurthy, Ph. D., PE
Examiner
Art Unit 3753
December 4, 2001




Michael Powell Buiz
Supervisory Patent Examiner
US Patent & Trademark Office

12/5/01